

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

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O R 080839Z SEP 77

FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6265

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USLO PEKING

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 7597

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, KS, JA

SUBJECT: ROK-JAPAN MINISTERIAL MEETING

REF: SEOUL 7558 (R 070925Z SEP 77)

SUMMARY: JAPANESE POLCOUNS PROVIDED EMBASSY WITH REVIEW OF IN-FIGHTING INVOLVED IN NEGOTIATING ROK-JAPANESE MINISTERIAL MEETING COMMUNIQUE. ON BALANCE HE VIEWED OUTCOME OF MEETING AS SATISFACTORY. END SUMMARY.

1. JAPANESE COUNSELOR MABUCHI TOLD EMBOFF SEPT 8 THAT HE WAS QUITE PLEASED AT OUTCOME OF ROK-JAPAN MINISTERIAL IN TOKYO SEPT 5-6. MABUCHI SAID HE DID NOT ATTEND MEETING BUT HAD NEGOTIATED COMMUNIQUE LANGUAGE IN SEOUL WITH ROK FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIALS. MABUCHI SAID JAPANESE FOREIGN MINISTRY HAD NOT PROVIDED HIM MUCH FLEXIBILITY
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FOR NEGOTIATIONS WITH ROKG. HE SAID MAIN OBJECTIVE OF ROKG NEGOTIATORS APPEARED TO BE TO SECURE SOME FORM OF ACKNOWLEDGEMENT BY GOJ IN COMMUNIQUE THAT TRADE IMBALANCE BETWEEN ROK AND JAPAN WOULD BE RECTIFIED. MABUCHI SAID GAIMUSHO WAS CONCERNED THAT REFERENCE TO BALANCED TRADE IN THIS COMMUNIQUE WOULD CAUSE AMERICANS AND EUROPEANS TO MAKE DEMANDS ON GOJ FOR SIMILAR

COMMITMENT TO BALANCED TRADE. HE NOTED THAT US TRADE NEGOTIATORS WERE AT THAT TIME IN TOKYO. MABUCHI SAID FINAL COMMUNIQUE ULTIMATELY CONTAINED REFERENCE TO BALANCED ROK-JAPAN TRADE BUT REFERENCE TO "RECTIFICATION" OF TRADE IMBALANCE WAS DELETED.

2. MABUCHI SAID KOREANS ALSO PRESSED HARD FOR REFERENCE TO NEED FOR JAPANESE ECONOMIC COOPERATION AS A COUNTER-WEIGHT TO US TROOP WITHDRAWAL. HE SAID IN FACT JAPANESE HAD AGREED TO MAKE SOME MINOR CONCESSIONS BUT HE DID NOT SPELL OUT WHAT THESE WERE.

3. ON THE POLITICAL SIDE MABUCHI SAID KOREANS PRESSED HARD FOR LANGUAGE IN COMMUNIQUE LIMITING JAPANESE FLEXIBILITY IN DEALING WITH NRRTH KOREA AND FOR JAPANESE COMMITMENT TO PROTECT THE WELFARE OF THE KOREAN COMMUNITY IN JAPAN. MABUCHI SAID JAPANESE WANTED LANGUAGE IN COMMUNIQUE RECOGNIZING IMPORTANCE OF "INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS" IN RESOLVING KOREAN PROBLEM. KOREANS OBJECTED SINCE THIS MIGHT IMPLY JAPANESE CONTACT WITH NORTH KOREA OVER THE HEADS OF THE ROK. MABUCHI THEN PROPOSED INSERTION OF WORD "APPROPRIATE" BEFORE THE PHRASE "INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS" AND ROKG ACCEPTED THIS LANGUAGE ON BASIS OF ARGUMENT THAT CONTACT WITH NORTH KOREA OVER ROKG'S HEAD WOULD NOT BE "APPROPRIATE". (N.B., WORD IN COMMUNIQUE IS "ADEQUATE" RATHER THAN "APPROPRIATE".) MABUCHI SAID CONFIDENTIAL

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ROKG ALSO MADE EFFORT TO RESTRICT JAPANESE FLEXIBILITY IN DEALING WITH NORTH KOREANS ON FISHERIES MATTERS BY INSISTING COMMUNIQUE SAY THAT JAPANESE AGREEMENTS ON THIS SUBJECT IN NORTHEAST ASIA WOULD BE CONSISTENT WITH INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS TO ESTABLISH NEW SEA ORDER. JAPANESE MODIFIED THIS TO APPLY WORLDWIDE, THEREBY AVOIDING IMPLICATION THAT PASSAGE WAS DIRECTED AT NORTH KOREANS.

COMMENT: JAPANESE CONCERN THAT USG WOULD USE COMMUNIQUE REFERENCE TO BALANCED BILATERAL TRADE AS LEVER IS GOOD DEBATING POINT, BUT IGNORES REAL PROBLEM IN KOREANS' MINDS THAT INFORMAL JAPANESE ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS HAVE BEEN USED TO RESTRICT KOREAN EXPORTS. KOREANS ARE STILL CASTING AROUND FOR AN EFFECTIVE COUNTERMEASURE AND CONTINUE TO CONSIDER USING ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS THEMSELVES, BUT THE ECONOMICS OF BUYING IN JAPAN ARE OFTEN TOO STRONG. WE ENCOURAGED MOFA OFFICIALS IN ROK DELEGATION TO TAKE TOUGH LINE WITH JAPANESE ON THIS SUBJECT. DEPARTMENT MAY NOW WISH TO ATTEMPT TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF SLIGHT HEADWAY WHICH KOREANS APPEAR TO HAVE MADE.
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